

**DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTER
GLYNCO, GEORGIA 31524**

FLETC DIRECTIVE (FD)

NUMBER: 67-31

Subject:

DATE: 01/14/97

Sunset Review: 01/14/00

FRATERNIZATION BETWEEN CENTER
PERSONNEL AND STUDENTS

1. PURPOSE. This directive publishes the policies and provides guidance in administering the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center's (FLETC's) policy on fraternization (improper or otherwise unprofessional personal relationships) between Center personnel and students.
2. SCOPE. This directive covers all students in FLETC-conducted or FLETC-supported training (including Student Interns and Stay-In-School students) and all staff (permanent, detailed, contract, and other agency) who instruct students, who are in a position to influence the evaluation of students, or whose activities might present an appearance of impropriety reflecting on the FLETC.
3. BACKGROUND. The public, participating organizations, staff, and students have the right to expect that decisions, in appearance and actuality, are based upon professionalism and impartiality. Such an environment encourages mutual professional respect as the fundamental basis for student/staff relationships at the FLETC and contributes to the continued effective performance of the duties and responsibilities of the FLETC.
4. POLICIES.
 - a. The FLETC will foster a professional training and work environment which preserves mutual respect between students and staff.
 - b. Personal relationships between staff and students are inappropriate and prohibited when the association:
 - (1) is unduly familiar and does not respect the differences in position and status between students and staff;

(2) involves or creates the appearance of preferential treatment or the improper use of the relationship for personal gain or gratification, or the abuse of an employee's official position;

(3) adversely affects morale or the effective performance of duties and responsibilities related to the FLETC;

(4) denigrates the credibility of FLETC's student evaluation system;

(5) reflects badly upon the FLETC; or

(6) is otherwise manifested in the work environment in a manner which is disruptive to the effective conduct of training.

c. Staff members and students who are married or otherwise closely related (e.g., father/daughter, friends, etc.) must also maintain the requisite professionalism and impartiality.

5. GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING THE PROPRIETY OF A RELATIONSHIP.

a. There are many variations of appropriate and inappropriate personal relationships between students and staff. No policy document could provide an exhaustive listing of what relationships and conduct are appropriate as opposed to inappropriate. The exercise of sound judgment by all persons covered by this directive, relative to the principles outlined in this section, is required in order to avoid injury to the FLETC and allow the FLETC to achieve its mission. Exercising sound judgment in assessing the existence of an inappropriate relationship is also important to fostering professional student/staff relationships.

b. Inappropriate personal relationships may involve any combination of staff members and students, regardless of grade or gender. Factors to be considered when assessing the propriety of any student/staff relationship include:

(1) whether one individual exercises authority over the other;

(2) whether one individual has the capability of influencing evaluations, assignments, benefits, or privileges of the other; and

(3) the nature of the personal relationship between the individuals, including actual or perceived impact on training and others in training.

c. Below is a partial listing of relationships and conduct involving staff and students which are likely to be inappropriate. Many are also prohibited by the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, 5 C.F.R. 2635.

- (1) Excessive and/or frequent socializing.
- (2) Going into private business together.
- (3) Lending or borrowing money for profit or benefit of any kind.
- (4) Giving or receiving gifts except as otherwise authorized under the Standards of Ethical Conduct.
- (5) Dating, cohabitation, or sexual intimacy.
- (6) Intimate communication involving romantic or sexual overtones.
- (7) Any training or work-related change based on favoritism or otherwise not based on legitimate training considerations; for example, changing duty rosters or work schedules to the benefit of one or more members involved in a personal relationship when others are not afforded the same consideration.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. All personnel at the Center have a responsibility for maintaining high standards of integrity, impartiality, and conduct to assure effective performance of the duties and responsibilities of the Center and maintenance of public trust. Fraternization and other inappropriate student/staff relationships violate those standards. All incidents of fraternization or other inappropriate student/staff relationships must be reported to the Director through the applicable supervisory chain. The Director will ensure that the matter is referred to the Office of Inspector General (OIG). If the allegation involves employees of a participating agency, the agency representative will be notified. In those cases where the OIG declines to assert jurisdiction, the Director, after considering the facts and circumstances of the case, will, if necessary, order additional fact finding and ultimately refer the matter to an appropriate supervisory level for corrective action and/or resolution.

b. Every supervisor, manager, and employee is responsible for ensuring that all employees and students know the FLETC's policy regarding fraternization and inappropriate student/staff relationships, and that they also understand its application. Supervisors and managers are further responsible for taking appropriate administrative

and/or disciplinary action upon determining that any student/staff relationship is contrary to the provisions of this directive.

c. Persons involved in or contemplating student/staff relationships which could be considered inappropriate are strongly encouraged to seek counseling from their supervisory chain to resolve any potential conflict with this policy as quickly as possible. Personnel must, however, recognize their responsibility to avoid inappropriate student/staff relationships and be aware that the cessation or deferral of a personal relationship will frequently be the appropriate way to resolve a conflict with this policy. If a covered relationship appears to be developing between a staff member and a student, the individual must defer any personal relationship until after the student completes his or her training and departs from the Center.

8. OFFICE OF PRIMARY INTEREST. Office of the Director.

Charles F. Rinkevich
Director